

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed January 5, 2004, has been received and reviewed. Claims 17-25 and 47-52 are pending and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as assertedly lacking a nexus between the preamble and the body of the claim.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to recite the nexus between the preamble and the claim body, as suggested by the Examiner. Thus, claims 17-25 and 47-52 clearly recite that the purpose of the method has been attained. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

After entry of the amendment and consideration of the remarks, the claims should be in condition for allowance. The applicants respectfully solicit early notice thereof. If questions should remain, the Office is kindly invited to contact the applicant's representative at the number provided herein.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: February 13, 2004  
GSD/gsd